

Utahns celebrate holiday of nation's working class

By Brent Israelson 9-1-84
Deseret News staff writer

To many people, Labor Day is just another holiday, a day out of school or an elongated weekend. Like most holidays, its symbolism is easily forgotten, obscured by crazed pre-season ski sales and back-to-school specials.

But the nation's working class doesn't forget. Workers and their families are patriotically proud of the holiday, which was conceived of more than 100 years ago by Peter J. McGuire, a Knights of Labor leader, and approved by Congress in 1894.

They are particularly proud in Utah, which is nicknamed the Beehive State for its industry.

Two areas stand out as ardent observers of the holiday — Park City and Carbon County. Both are centers of mining industry and of labor movements gone by.

Residents of Park City, a town that boomed rich in silver mining from the 1880s to the Depression, have always loved Labor Day — Miners Day to them. This year, they have more to celebrate than labor: their own centennial. In 1884, the community was incorporated as a bona fide city of the Utah Territory.

Kicking off the dual celebration is a get-together Saturday for anyone who has ever lived in Park City — a picnic at 1 p.m. and a dance at 8 p.m. at the Memorial Building on Main Street.

Interdenominational religious services be will held Sunday, followed by a chuck wagon breakfast and parade.

In the afternoon, look for the traditional mucking and drilling contests, which test the mining skills of participants. There also will be races, games, a softball tournament, music, art and a theatrical

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Early Beehive State workers may symbolize past labors.

